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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 5 October 1992, at 10 a..m.

President:	Mr. GANEV	(Bulgaria)
later:	Mr. JESUS (Vice-President)	(Cape Verde)
later:	Mr. GANEV (President)	(Bulgaria)

- Address by Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

- General debate [9] (continued)

  Statements made by

  Mr. Pursoo (Grenada)
  Mr. Sipaseuth (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
  Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda)
  Mr. Touré (Guinea-Bissau)
  Mr. Gyaw (Myanmar)

- Tentative programme of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. NURSULTAN NAZARBAEV, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President NAZARBAEV (interpretation from Russian): First, I should like to express our profound satisfaction, Sir, at your election to your high post, and we wish you every success in carrying out your duties as President of the United Nations General Assembly at its current session.

At the preceding session the Republic of Kazakhstan was unanimously admitted as a Member of the United Nations. On behalf of the people of Kazakhstan, I have the honour to express our deep gratitude for that step and to declare that the Republic of Kazakhstan, as a peace-loving State, is fully capable of fulfilling its obligations, as defined in the Charter of the United Nations, and of making a constructive contribution in all the spheres of activity of this authoritative international Organization.

The current session is no less important for us, since during this session the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan has for the first time, been given the opportunity to speak from this rostrum. I take this opportunity to extend cordial greetings to all the States Members of the United Nations. It would be difficult by now to conceive of the present world order without the United Nations. The world community places many hopes in

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this unique international organization, chief among them being the formation of a reliable machinery, reliable stability and security.

The world has now come close to the threshold beyond which the visible disturbing challenges of the future compel us to adopt a new quality of coordination, a new way to organize our joint efforts.

We must clarify what is the essence of this new and as yet unknown process, and we must master it within the context of our whole community, our continent, our region and our own country. These are the aspects on which I should like to focus Members' attention.

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The first aspect relates to the world community itself and the role of the United Nations in the world. At this session there has already emerged an understanding of the new realities, which must be defined in a new agenda for the entire world. It is no accident that this is the title of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's well-known report. We believe that his concept of preventive diplomacy is an extremely timely, politically rational initiative, in the realization of which all members of the world community should become involved.

In this connection I regard preventive diplomacy as a system of political and socio-economic measures designed to prevent hotbeds of potential tension from bursting into flame. An important place in it is occupied by the conditions which are needed for maintaining social and political stability and are visible on the surface and by those problems the detection of whose very existence requires prognosticatory analysis in depth.

It is not difficult to understand that the question of borders is a powder-keg that could explode at any moment, and the explosion usually hurts not only those who are playing with fire but also many others who have only a very remote connection with the fuse-lighters. In my view, it is obvious that even one precedent in the revision of currently existing borders would cause a chain reaction of geopolitical disintegration with unforeseeable consequences.

In referring to the importance of the principle of the inviolability of State territory, I should like to emphasize that the rights of national minorities today are often thought to be identical with the rights of nations to self-determination, extending even to the establishment of independent States. If we were to hold to such an approach, then, hypothetically speaking, thousands of economically weak sovereign States might arise all over

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the world. Such a situation would be a striking demonstration of turning a principle into a fetish, carrying it to the ultimate absurdity.

I am convinced that the world community, which today quite rightly gives so much attention to the rights of national minorities, should define clearly the criteria for such rights, in order to ensure that human rights and the rights of nations will triumph on the basis of the triumph of democracy and peace. Otherwise, under cover of a nation's right to self-determination, the integrity of any national State will be called into question, and the corrosive principle of separatism will go on without end.

At the same time, taking a look forward from the present day to the twenty-first century in a search for hotbeds of potential tension, I wish to draw the world community's attention, among other questions that give cause for great concern, to the problem of water in the Central Asian region, which in time might become a source of dangerous disputes in the very heart of the oldest continent. I am convinced that we need to speed up work now, not later, on the preparation of special United Nations projects that would provide for a gradual and effective solution to the problem of furnishing water resources to Central Asia.

I must point out that the decrease in geopolitical tension along East-West lines and the increasingly dangerous confrontation between North and South is a universally recognized fact. However, the emergence and exacerbation of the second confrontation do not decrease the timeliness of the first. The long-standing complexity of relations between East and West cannot be dissipated with the breakup of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Accordingly, I believe that the proposed efforts for preventive diplomacy in establishing, keeping and enhancing the peace should be exerted equally

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along all the lines of global interaction. I stress this because some distortions have already become visible in this connection. United Nations efforts, to judge from the events of recent months, are predominantly political and military-political in nature. We see more use being made of prohibitions than of encouragement and incentives. These measures are aimed at reducing the tensions, visible on the surface, but so far they have not had any influence on the roots of the conflicts that have arisen and grown. The real cause of these conflicts was recently pointed out from this rostrum. The richest 20 per cent of the world's people, in the Northern and Western countries, consume 83 per cent of the world's gross product, and the poorest 20 per cent of the world's people, in the countries of the South and the East, only 1.4 per cent. As we can see, the income of the richest 20 per cent is 60 times that of the poorest 20 per cent. I would call this 60 to 1 ratio the formula for world inequality. Until this gap begins to narrow, we shall not have a real basis for the comprehensive prevention of conflicts.

I emphasize that, in the final analysis, we are not talking about redistributing the income of the wealthiest 20 per cent for the benefit of the poor. The world inequality formula should be changed not by reducing the income of the wealthiest 20 per cent but by increasing that of the poorest through organized assistance to help their countries develop. It may be worthwhile to think about redirecting United Nations efforts towards genuine conflict prevention and finding the root causes of conflicts. What practical steps can be taken in this regard?

I can understand the Secretary-General's concern over the main problem that impedes United Nations peace-keeping efforts - the shortage of financial

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resources. It is obvious that United Nations expenditures for the establishment, maintenance and enhancement of peace must be increased each year. But how can this be done?

As is well known, until 1992, United Nations expenditures on peace-keeping totalled approximately US$8.3 billion, not even 1 per cent of total annual defence expenditures in all countries at the end of the last decade, which was approximately 1 trillion dollars.

I propose that all countries should, as a demonstration of their good will, begin to set up a fund for United Nations peacemaking efforts on the basis of the "one plus one" formula. This means that each State would begin to transfer 1 per cent of its defence budget to the fund and would increase its transfers by the same 1 per cent each year. Thus the amount allocated to peacemaking in 10 years would increase tenfold.

I think that the national security of every member of the world community would be by no means harmed but, on the contrary, actually strengthened by such an action. It is appropriate to recall here the Eastern story which tells of some people who held a contest of strength. One showed the power of his muscles and fists, another found strength in the hardness of his skull, the third in his fleetness of foot, the fourth in the sharpness of his tongue. But a wise man, remembering the heart, without which no strength is possible, suggested that they should compete in generosity. The generosity of each country will be what determines the degree to which my proposal is implemented - a sort of competition for the benefit of the whole world. The Republic of Kazakhstan is ready to begin this process immediately. There are,

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of course, also other ways that can be provided for States to contribute to the fund for United Nations peacemaking efforts.

The second aspect on which I should like to dwell is the problem of peace and security in our continent of Asia or, more broadly, in Eurasia. I am referring to the initiative put forward by the Republic of Kazakhstan to hold a conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICMA). The idea of establishing structures for security and cooperation in Asia of the same type as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) has long been in the air but has not yet gained wide support.

The useful experience of the activities of continental organizations in the Americas, in Africa and in Europe should, it would seem, impel Asia as well to establish unified bodies for interaction and cooperation. But this is not happening, and there are quite a few real reaso s for that fact. Politicians and analysts critical of the idea of setting up structures for security and cooperation in Asia often advance the weighty argument that the level of geographical, historical, economic, political social and cultural heterogeneity among Asian countries is much higher than that among the countries of Europe, the Americas, or Africa. Such heterogeneity in economic and political matters naturally interferes with the action of continental structures for collective security.

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This can be countered with a well-known piece of Oriental wisdom: A journey of a thousand steps starts with the first step. It is by no means necessary to move towards a unified Asian structure and collective security in all these types of interaction at once. It is sufficient to start levelling out the heterogeneity in one area - for instance, in the military-political or economic sphere - and then look for joint approaches in other fields of cooperation. The move towards such a continental structure could take place in many steps and on a stage-by-stage basis. For example, it could go from bilateral relations through regional and continental structures and coalitions in particular types of cooperation, through the elaboration of confidence-building measures and collective security, as well as humanitarian, economic and cultural interaction, to common continental bodies for cooperation on a broad spectrum of problems.

Prospects for this process and its main stages might be as follows:

The first stage would consist of preparatory work to organize and conduct the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICMA). The approximate time-frame would be 1992 to 1994.

The second stage would involve accelerating the work of CICMA, increasing the number of its members, adapting it to the framework of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Asia (CSCA) and forming pan-Asian structures of the CSCE type. The approximate time-frame could be 1994 to 1998.

The third stage would include defining the development of CSCA, strengthening its permanent structures, interaction between CSCE and CSCA and the creation of transcontinental bodies in particular areas of cooperation. The approximate time-frame would be 1998 to 2000.

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The fourth stage would consist in forming a unified transcontinental conference on security and cooperation in Eurasia and creating machinery for permanent interaction between the continental systems of collective security in Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas, with the further prospect of setting up a unified global system of collective security and cooperation. The approximate time-frame would be 2000 to 2005.

We in Asia live in a remarkable land. All the major religions of the world - Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam - were born in the sacred soil of our continent. All the spiritual teachers of mankind, ranging from Lao-tse and Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ and Muhammad to the greatest of contemporary thinkers, of the calibre of Mahatma Gandhi, were born in our part of the world. Is it not possible for Asia to absorb everything that has been accumulated over the ages and synthesize a new concept of continental cooperation and collective security?

This position by no means presupposes any regional autarky. We are not going to lock ourselves within continental borders. On the contrary, in the interests of Asian countries and peoples, we shall collect the best of what was born in other parts of the world.

I am convinced that we must make a collective search for the best way to meet the challenges of the future and lay new foundations for mankind's existence in a world more integrated than ever before. Accordingly, I suggest that we should convene a special session or a United Nations conference to discuss the problems of the post-confrontation era, for it is the mission of the United Nations to play a decisive role in confirming new levels of organization in the international community. The United Nations itself should

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probably be reorganized to a certain extent, and this includes the question of the membership of the Security Council.

The third aspect, which we cannot fail to mention, concerns the events that are taking place in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The fragile structure of our Commonwealth, set up at the end of last year, does not yet fully take into account the age-old traditions of interaction between States and peoples in this part of Eurasia. As a result, the processes of transition to free-market economics and democracy in the CIS are accompanied by increasing socio-economic and political instability, the exacerbation of existing conflicts and the emergence of new ones.

Kazakhstan is making every possible effort to re-establish a common customs and economic area in a new capacity within the framework of a unified free-trade zone.

Realists in the CIS have no illusions as far as the $24 billion of assistance promised to Russia is concerned. We take a calm view of the neo-isolationist policy that some of the world's countries are pursuing towards the CIS. We realize that only we ourselves, through our own efforts, can stop industrial decline, the severing of economic ties, hyperinflation and other destructive processes. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that despite efforts to strengthen the principles of coordination and the process of integration, contradictory trends may prevail in the CIS in the immediate future, so that the entire territory of the Commonwealth could turn into an area of instability and disintegration. I am certain that such a tragic outcome would not be in the interest of anyone in the world.

In this connection, I believe that the concept of early conflict detection and preventive diplomacy might find direct practical implementation

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in the former Soviet federation. I am referring primarily to strengthening the areas of stability that exist in the CIS and then gradually expanding their borders by reducing tensions in the areas of conflict. To that end, I propose setting up a regional centre, or a United Nations commission, on preventive diplomacy in Central Asia. The headquarters of the centre could be located at Alma-Ata, the capital of our State.

Lastly, I should like to discuss the vitally important issues of ecology and environmental protection. For Kazakhstan, these issues are embodied in at least two areas, the Aral Sea and Semipalatinsk.

The Aral Sea drying up; it is a zone of ecological catastrophe that demands large-scale international emergency assistance. The desertification of its basin, accompanied by the dissemination of 150 million tons of salty dust, is causing drastic deterioration of the environment and increasing the negative effects on the economy and the health of a vast region with a population of more than 300 million inhabitants. If today this means tragedy for tens of thousands of people, tomorrow, without emergency intervention by the United Nations, it could mean tragedy for millions.

Kazakhstan is grateful for the decision by the leadership of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to set up an assistance project for developing a plan to save the Aral Sea and also grateful for the suggestion by a group of UNEP experts that the Aral Sea basin should be declared a zone of global ecological disaster.

The other severe ecological problem we are suffering from involves the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, which was built on Kazakh land against the will of our people. The total power of the nuclear warheads that were set off

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here - in the atmosphere, on the ground and underground - brought suffering to more than half a million people; it is hundreds of times as large as the power of the devices that brought tragedy to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

By a decision of our Government, we have closed down this source of death, but tremendous amounts of resources will be needed to clean up this region, to cure those who have suffered and to ensure the safety of the children who will again be born here. The people of Kazakhstan will therefore need active international assistance.

Today, on 5 October, we celebrate the anniversary of the creation of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). Recognizing its unquestionable importance, Kazakhstan hopes for effective technical and advisory assistance from the Centre to our programmes of governmental development for urban and rural construction.

The Kazakh people has a proverb, "Elu zhylda el zhana," which literally means, "The world becomes new every 50 years". The first half-century of the existence of the United Nations has been marked by confrontation between super-Powers and the burden of opposing military blocs. Now the world community has a historic opportunity to find in the form of the United Nations the means to bring about effective cooperation in the name of peace and progress. We must do our utmost to take full advantage of it.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. PURSOO (Grenada): It is with profound pleasure that my delegation conveys to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session the greetings and best wishes of the Government and people of Grenada.

We wish to extend to you, Sir, warm congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this session. My delegation commends Mr. Samir Shihabi of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the excellent manner in which he conducted the business of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

We take this opportunity also to extend congratulations to the new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to commend him for the strong leadership he has brought to the United Nations and for the dedication with which he has carried out his duties since assuming office.

The delegation of Grenada is delighted to welcome to the United Nations the 13 new Members: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The current world situation presents a scenario of unmistakable complexities. The end of the cold war, rapid democratization world wide, the emergence of new national sentiments, intolerance towards ethnic, religious and cultural differences and the formation of regional economic blocs have brought about a restructuring of programmes and a reordering of agendas locally, regionally and globally. Economic interests now appear to be given precedence in most, if not all, considerations.

The proponents of those changes declare their objectives to be the creation of efficient and competitive production systems, free trade and

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absolute freedom from control of market forces. But those objectives, though ostensibly neutral, are in fact heavily tilted in favour of the technologically advanced economies and insensitive to the capacities and priorities of the developing countries.

That there are other equally important, even primary, objectives to be achieved by the less developed countries cannot be denied. Indeed, the market economy is being perfected, and the time is right for serious responses aimed at eradicating the conditions of poverty and deprivation that are so widespread in the modern world. That process must be activated with the urgent aim of ensuring that economic progress is buttressed by social equity, freedom from want, good health and education and the enjoyment of basic human rights. Those concerns will no doubt be addressed at the proposed World Summit for Social Development, which my Government is pleased to support. If we fail to develop strategies and programmes to address those problems, then the impending conditions of increased hunger, poverty and social deprivation can culminate in very serious global unrest and instability.

Grenada is dealing with this new cold economic world at both the domestic and regional levels. I wish to make it clear that the Government and people of Grenada recognize and accept that the responsibility for the advancement of our country rests, first and foremost, squarely on our shoulders.

Grenada has taken steps to restructure its economy in the face of severe fiscal deficits, which threatened to erode our credit-worthiness, deny us space for growth and development and pauperize our people. Our self-imposed structural adjustment programme has its social, political and other costs. However, my Government is convinced that with prudent management of our very limited resources, a willingness to sacrifice, firm and cohesive political

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leadership and external assistance, we will in due course restore our economic well-being and place our country on a sound growth path. My delegation is happy to report that some improvements have already been realized, and we look forward to achieving all the goals of our structural adjustment programme.*

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* Mr. Jesus (Cape Verde), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Pursoo, Grenada)

Small countries, in particular small developing island countries with all the particular difficulties that development presents to them, can hardly compete in the world arena with developed countries. While demonstrating our determination to help ourselves, we appeal to donor countries to give renewed consideration to the difficulties confronting small developing island countries; and we appeal to the international community in general for the concessions we need to attain our development goals.

As we meet at this forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, a number of small island States in the Caribbean, highly dependent on the banana industry, are faced with an uncaring call by certain countries to have bananas placed within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). My delegation submits that the outcome of such a campaign could wipe out the banana industry in our islands. The resulting social hardships and political instability are costs which will be ruinous to our societies. These situations can be avoided if present conditions continue to prevail. Grenada reiterates is appeal for flexibility on the banana issue and calls upon the pro-tariff lobby to relax its efforts.

At this particular time in the history of the Caribbean region, we are seized of the urgency to organize our response to the new international order. Earlier this year, regional Governments received with pleasure the report of the West Indian Commission, which was mandated to examine the conditions of Caribbean societies and to make recommendations for preparing the region for the economic, political and social challenges of the twenty-first century. The report of the Commission was very inspiring. It points the region along certain beneficial paths, and Grenada looks forward to the full consideration of the Commission's recommendations by Caribbean heads of Government in the near future.

(Mr. Pursoo, Grenada)

The recently concluded United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) heralded a new beginning and was undoubtedly one of the most significant undertakings of the United Nations. My Government wishes to applaud Mr. Maurice Strong and the entire UNCED secretariat for the successful conclusion of that summit and to extend our congratulations to the Government of Brazil for successfully hosting the Conference. Its real achievements should become manifest over time through the implementation of the work plan on sustainable development, Agenda 21, which comprehensively addressed the critical indivisibility of development and concern for the environment. My Government is also pleased with the conventions on climate change and biological diversity which were opened for signature at the Rio summit. We look forward to an early implementation of both conventions. The Government of Grenada urges conscientious efforts to establish the mechanisms, strategies and the resource commitments agreed to. From the perspective of small island States in particular, this is an absolute necessity.

Our overriding concern for the welfare of our people and the wholesomeness of our environment, in particular the fragile marine environment upon which we are heavily dependent, compels us to register a most vigorous protest against the planned shipment of tons of radioactive material through the Caribbean Sea later this month.

The problems of illicit drug trafficking and money-laundering have now reached levels that no country is able to combat single-handedly. Indeed, the security and sovereign integrity of our State, the rule of law and the well-being of our economic and financial institutions demand that we persevere in this fight. My Government wishes to take advantage of this occasion to express its appreciation for the efforts undertaken by a number of developed

(Mr. Pursoo, Grenada)

countries to assist developing nations in the campaign against the drug trade. We appeal for increased multilateral support to institute comprehensive measures aimed at the reduction of demand, interdiction, the rehabilitation of victims, and appropriate punishment for the couriers of this particular form of death and destruction.

It is distressing to note that, while progress has been made in the political sphere in terms of the peaceful resolution of certain conflicts and the abatement of ideological tensions, the nerves of the international community are being shaken by the situation in the Balkans, most specifically, by the evidence of what is being described as "ethnic cleansing". Recognizing that peace and stability are essential to the promotion of social progress, the Government of Grenada wishes to reaffirm its support for United Nations attempts to halt the fighting in Yugoslavia, and we call upon the international community to act in a concerted manner to put a stop to what could escalate into a larger and more intractable conflict.

My Government continues to be keenly interested in the situation in South Africa. The persistent violence clearly threatens the negotiating process and delays the transition to a democratic South Africa. We are concerned that while strides have been made to dismantle the pillars of apartheid, greater efforts must be made to accelerate the pace of reforms, so as to enhance the climate for free political activity and genuine democracy. The Government of Grenada therefore welcomes recent positive signals pointing to the resumption of dialogue between the African National Congress and the Government of South Africa.

My Government also welcomes the peace talks currently taking place among the key parties to the Middle East conflict and wishes to counsel continued

(Mr. Pursoo, Grenada)

dialogue and flexibility in order to bring lasting solutions to that region's problems.

Over the last year, numerous initiatives to reinstate ousted Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide have been frustrated. Sanctions announced by the Organization of American States have not produced the anticipated results because of the evident unwillingness of some countries to enforce the measures. My Government wishes to reiterate its support for the return to power of the constitutionally elected Government of Haiti and calls upon the international community to continue to support the restoration of Haiti's democracy.

The international community is now reasonably expecting greater United Nations involvement in the maintenance of global peace and security. At the same time, more attention and resources are expected to be focused on the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian needs of the developing countries. My delegation wishes to encourage greater efforts to realize the benefits of peace dividends and to channel them towards those needs.

The Government of Grenada is cognizant of the challenging efforts at revitalization being undertaken throughout the United Nations system so as to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness. We anticipate that this revitalization will emphasize the priorities of the countries most in need - the developing countries. We are convinced that the regional economic commissions are in a good position to deal with a wide range of development issues and should thus be given greater autonomy in the implementation of regional programmes.

(Mr. Pursoo, Grenada)

The financial difficulties confronting the United Nations are of deep concern to Grenada, as I am sure they are to many Member States. We recognize the importance of a financially strong United Nations with the capacity to deal effectively with problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, to promote peace, security, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. At the same time, it is true that many Governments are experiencing severe difficulties in meeting their primary financial obligations. It is hardly the time for additional commitments due to reckless causes and senseless conflicts.

As we approach the end of the International Decade of Disabled Persons, we must acknowledge that too little has been done to enable disabled persons to see themselves as equal citizens. In this regard my Government takes this opportunity to encourage measures aimed at enhancing the fuller participation and welfare of didsabled persons in their respective societies.

Despite the tremendous amount of work to be done in order to build and consolidate democracy and improve the standard of living for peoples everywhere, Grenada believe that, with the collective efforts of all States and the purposeful involvement of the United Nations, our aspirations will be achieved.

Mr. SIPASEUTH (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (spoke in Lao; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation): Mr. President, on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I wish to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that you will brilliantly fulfil the important mission conferred upon you by the Assembly.

(Mr. Sipaseuth, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

I also wish to express sincerest congratulations to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has assumed his office and high responsibilities at a time when the world situation requires that the United Nations play an important role.

We cannot miss this opportunity to pay a special tribute to his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his active contribution to the defence of our Organization's cause.

We warmly welcome the presence among us of new Members: the Republic of Armenia, the Azerbaijani Republic, the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Georgia, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of San Marino, the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. Their admission is an important step towards the universality of our Organization.

The global situation is in a state of profound change, both complex and full of new promise. With the breakup of the Eastern bloc, military and nuclear confrontation have progressively waned. None the less, numerous civil conflicts, ethnic struggles, religious clashes and border conflicts continue to disturb many countries of the world, thus seriously threatening international peace, stability and security.

All of this not withdstanding, it must be noted that the world climate is evolving towards co-operation, development and the settlement of global problems, including those related to poverty, to misery and to the environment.

In the changing world in which the new international order is beginning to take shape, the United Nations must play a central role in the collective

(Mr. Sipaseuth, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

effort to define this new order, which should respond equitably to the rights and interests of all countries and peoples without discrimination and must be based on the principles of peaceful coexistence and those of the United Nations Charter. It is therefore necessary to revitalize, restructure and democratize the United Nations if we want the Organization to be capable of the tasks that lie ahead in this new era.

We are still in an uncertain world characterized by many problems and conflicts in different regions.

In Europe, the situation prevailing in former Yugoslavia continues to deteriorate dangerously. It is a major source of concern for the international community, as well as a threat to regional and global peace and security. The international community must take appropriate measures to put an end to that ethnic conflict in order to restore peace, security and normal life to that part of the world.

In South Africa, despite certain political reforms the foundations of the apartheid system remain intact. The Pretoria regime continues to resort to violence to repress the black population, while the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) is forcefully and constructively pursuing its struggle for the triumph of its just cause. The Lao Government fully associates itself with the international community in its efforts to support the struggle of the great majority of that people in order to make South Africa a democratic and non-racial country.

In the Middle East, the situation remains tense and precarious. Israel is perpetuating its occupation of Palestinian territory and of the other Arab territories. We reaffirm the view that every effort for peace now under way

(Mr. Sipaseuth, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

with a view to a just, comprehensive and lasting solution in the Middle East, at the heart of which is the question of Palestine, should work towards rapid implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the other resolutions of the United Nations calling for Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands, as well as recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

In the Persian Gulf, following the end of the war peace and security have not yet been established because of threats of and attempts at further hostilities.

(Mr. Sipaseuth, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

In Western Asia, Afghanistan remains a theatre of civil war. The international community must appeal to all the parties concerned to put an immediate end to their conflicts in order to achieve national harmony among Afghans and to establish political, economic and social stability.

In the Korean peninsula, the signing of the North-South Accord on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression and Exchanges and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea has contributed to promoting mutual understanding and trust. It has opened up a new prospect for peace, stability and cooperation in the Korean peninsula and strengthened peace and security in the North-East Asian region and in the rest of the world.

In the South-East Asian region, in spite of certain factors of instability, the situation as a whole is moving towards peace, stability, cooperation and development in the interest of the peoples of the entire region. In this context, inspired by the desire to strengthen relations of friendship and cooperation with neighbouring countries, the Lao Government, applying its consistent foreign policy based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence, signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with the Kingdom of Thailand, became a party to the Treaty of Bali of 1976. It has also become an Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) observer. It will continue to work firmly for fruitful cooperation in South-East Asia, with a view to promoting the progress and prosperity of the region, thus contributing to promoting peace and development the world over.

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As regards the question of Cambodia, the signing of the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1991 laid the foundations for a comprehensive political settlement to the conflict, making it possible to put an end to the suffering endured by the Cambodian people during a long period of civil war and to establish peace and tranquillity in the noble land of Angkor. Complete compliance with, and implementation of, these Agreements is required to meet the aspirations and the interests of the Cambodian people.

In my own country, the implementation of our policy of renewal has led to important successes. Political stability and social order are solidly guaranteed. Democracy and the right of collective decision-making by the people have developed steadily in accordance with our level of economic and social development and the customs of the country. The adoption last year by the National Assembly of the first Constitution of the Republic makes it possible for our country to move progressively towards a State of law. In the framework of that policy we are focusing all our efforts on freeing the country of underdevelopment. To this end we have encouraged foreign investment, intensified cooperation with other countries and taken advantage of all economic sectors employing market-economy mechanisms in order to tap all our national potential and to improve the physical and spiritual living conditions of our people.

The world economy is in a state of uncertainty. Last year it experienced the first global recession since the 1940s. Moreover, the recovery remains weak and precarious. The developing countries continue to suffer from coercive economic policies and practices. The stifling burden of foreign

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debt, the decline in resources allocated to development, the deterioration of the terms of trade, the worsening of the outflow of capital, the drop in commodity prices, the rise in protectionism and limited access to modern technology all obstruct their economic progress at a time when reforms and readjustments are under way. Since the world economy is a single entity whose components are interdependent and interrelated, it is urgently necessary - indeed, crucial - to develop a new world consensus and to obtain a commitment to the strengthening of international cooperation, and in particular the revitalization of the economic growth and development of the developing countries, in order successfully to implement the economic strategy of the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, 1991-2000.

One of the most important issues related to development is that of the environment, which is at the forefront of our international concerns. Climate change, air, sea and ocean pollution, desertification and the depletion of the ozone layer have all had a negative impact on our lives and on the future of mankind. In this respect, we believe that the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro, laid the foundations of international agreement on cooperation aimed at integrating the environment into all development activities. It will therefore be up to the United Nations and its specialized agencies to implement effectively Agenda 21.

At the same time, the aspirations of the international community to a better quality of life and social progress have become more pressing and increasingly important. In fact, protection of the environment, promotion

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of economic growth and development, and the eradication of poverty are mutually reinforcing and require a new global partnership. In this framework, we are awaiting with interest the planned convening of the World Summit for Social Development.

The problem of the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs remains a source of global concern. The struggle against this scourge requires concerted, strong action by all countries. For its part, in order to contribute to the international effort the Lao Government has cooperated in the sphere of integrated rural development with certain interested countries, especially neighbouring countries, as well as with international organizations, including the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, and we are prepared to continue this cooperation.

In conclusion, the Lao delegation wishes to assure the President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, of its complete cooperation. We will work in a constructive spirit with other delegations to contribute to the success of this session of the General Assembly.

Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda): Exactly 500 years ago, in 1492, two worlds collided. That collision completely altered the fate of human civilization and the destinies of the two peoples involved. One people achieved ascending heights; the other virtually disappeared. What remains of the indigenous populations of the Caribbean, or much of the "new world", serves as a measurement of man's ability to be brutish in the pursuit of wealth. My Caribbean island country has been more than a witness of change in the 500-year decline, transformation and recreation of the region. From conquest through slavery, from colonial hegemony to political independence, Antigua and Barbuda has been a maker of history in the Caribbean and, indeed, in the larger region.

In 1992, however, our country stands, with the rest of the world, on the threshold of yet another momentous collision. This time the collision is between human civilization and nature; this time there are no ascending heights; this time humanity itself could disappear.

For 500 years, from Columbus to Rio, our forests and our oceans, our air and our lands - the Earth's gifts to humanity - have been wrongly regarded as inexhaustible and unchanging. "If Columbus uncovered our Earth's expanse, Rio revealed its limits." Humanity, all agree, cannot march along on its present course for another 500 years. In fact, humanity cannot proceed with business as usual for even another 100 years. Island countries, like my own and others in the Caribbean and in the Pacific, stand in real danger of being submerged by swollen oceans. Moreover, global warming, insidious climate change, ozone-layer depletion, the loss of forests and other dangers threaten humanity's very existence.

Dramatic changes in the systems of production, distribution and disposal are required of the industrialized countries if we are to save ourselves.

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Developed countries cannot consume the Earth's resources at current rates; developing countries cannot be made to languish in the dusty exhaust of rapidly accelerating technological societies. Sustainable development that takes account of environmental costs must begin to guide humanity's technological future. Only the United Nations and its General Assembly can construct the new world which, in Rio, this family of nations agreed to commence building immediately.

It is thus fitting that, in 1992, a representative of Bulgaria has been selected to preside over the General Assembly at its forth-seventh session. His nation is taking part in a great regional experiment, the outcome of which is sure to influence the course of human civilization worldwide. Antigua and Barbuda hails Bulgaria for its courage, and I pledge the full support of my delegation for the President throughout the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Permit me to applaud the outgoing President, Mr. Samir Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, for his unfailing efforts to bring reform to the United Nations and for his diligence during Saudi Arabia's year-long tenure. This community owes Mr. Shihabi a debt that can be repaid only through a continuous effort to strengthen the General Assembly during the coming years. We must focus our efforts on economic, social and humanitarian matters with no less vigour than is currently directed at political and security concerns. Antigua and Barbuda can be relied upon to promote the multilateral approach to problem solving, confident that multilateralism will always prove to be superior.

In that regard, it may be recalled that when we commenced the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly one year ago Haiti was free. The first

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democratically elected President of Haiti stood at this podium. The United Nations had contributed to the ending of tyranny in the Caribbean's oldest but poorest Republic, and all delegations celebrated with President Aristide.

Ten days after President Aristide's triumphant declaration in this Hall, tyranny once again raised its ugly head in our sister Caribbean isle. The military plotters who brutally seized power in Haiti one year ago are still on their perch. But this Assembly will never rest until democracy is restored and Haiti's people are again free.

Antigua and Barbuda, working within the framework established by the Organization of American States, will continue to press for the expansion of sanctions in order to isolate further the military regime in Haiti and to return Haiti to democracy. If we do not succeed quickly in Haiti, the United Nations will risk tarnishing its well-earned reputation for being able to tackle exceedingly complex problems in extremely violent situations in other corners of the globe.

In South Africa, for example, United Nations sanctions have assisted in bringing the apartheid regime to the negotiating table. It was 46 years ago, in 1946, that India brought the question of apartheid in South Africa to the attention of the United Nations; today, 179 Member States are anxious to see legalized racism exorcized from the body politic.

Twelve weeks ago, when the Security Council convened to seek a solution to the violence in South Africa, my delegation gave notice to the racist regime that any attempt on its part to delay the establishment of democracy in South Africa by fomenting violence would cause us to press for the reintroduction of the sanctions that had been relaxed. We repeat our pledge

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today. While they praise the courage of those who have entered into constitutional talks, my countrymen will never lose sight of the fact that apartheid is an evil whose demise the world's peoples eagerly await. Until apartheid is eliminated, South Africa will continue to be excluded from this family of nations.

Antigua and Barbuda takes this opportunity to welcome to our family the 12 newly independent nations that have emerged with the end of the cold war and the collapse of an empire. Island countries in the Caribbean gained their independence, beginning 30 years ago, during the decline of another empire.

It is thus with a shared sense of exhilaration that we welcome Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to membership of the United Nations. It may be too late to caution our new Members to avoid the pitfalls of fierce nationalism and unharnessed ethnic rivalry. Both inevitably lead to fractious and violent turmoil, which, we know, surely end without victors. All multiracial and multi-ethnic societies must learn to settle historic and current differences peacefully.

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Notwithstanding the domestic discord which may obtain following the arrival of independence, small nations which dwell in the geopolitical shadow of a giant must be forever diligent in protecting their sovereignty. The United Nations, fostering as it does respect for international law, remains the most certain guarantor of a small nation's independence.

Knowing the importance of the United Nations, therefore, we work towards fashioning a system which responds favourably to the interests of even the least among equals. Our world parliament cannot become, and must not ever appear to have become, the handmaiden of a few powerful Member States. The integrity of the United Nations lies in the ability of even its smallest Member to participate meaningfully in shaping United Nations policy.

Antigua and Barbuda thus welcomes San Marino to membership in this our family of nations. As our smallest Member State, San Marino bears a special responsibility to pronounce on the responsiveness of the United Nations to the initiatives of the less powerful. Antigua and Barbuda pledges its fullest co-operation with the delegation of San Marino, now and in the future.

We also congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, on demonstrating a willingness to speak boldly concerning matters to which insufficient attention has been paid. United Nations leadership must chart a course which promotes peace, justice and freedom wherever these cherished human values are in danger of disappearing.

The danger to cherished human values is also manifested in underdevelopment. Island developing countries, and other small countries, must look increasingly to the multilateral institutions for varied assistance in finding solutions to vexing problems. The United Nations system cannot

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reduce its economic and social development roles without adversely affecting prevailing material conditions.

Notwithstanding this admonition, our experience confirms that development is also greatly influenced by good governance and the intelligent use of scarce resources, including investment capital. While we have relied and will continue to rely on ourselves to provide good governance, our investment capital has to be imported. Our small size, however, puts us at the mercy of the major capital markets, over which Antigua and Barbuda, like other small countries, exercises not one iota of control. The United Nations, aware of the special disadvantages that are inherent in the small island developing country, must respond in a manner which appropriately reflects these circumstances.

My delegation thus takes this opportunity to commend highly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Its funding of, and support for, a number of beneficial projects within my region earns it great applause. However, we continue to object to the use of the per capita gross national product (GNP) device for determining development status and funding eligibility of small island countries. For large countries, the device is perfect. It was devised with large countries in mind. But when applied to a small island country, the per capita GNP device results in a distortion.

The measurement device fails to take into account the much higher cost per person which small populations incur for routine services that are provided at minimal cost to large populations, even large populations in poor countries. It fails to reflect the inherent inability of our embryonic manufacturing industries to penetrate major markets because their production

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levels reflect small size. It fails to reward good governance and sacrifice, preferring instead to believe the fiction that a well-run small island developing country has graduated, is developed and, hence, in need of no assistance because a distorted per capita GNP device so determines. We are flattered to be regarded as developed, but that characterization is inaccurate. We reject the per capita GNP device and therefore call for the use of more reliable indicators when assistance to small island developing countries is contemplated.

In projects relating to improvement of the environment, small island developing countries have been successful in persuading their larger partners to accept the fact that their unique vulnerabilities require special consideration. In this regard, Antigua and Barbuda, in its country report to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), identified high-priority areas pertaining to its heritage resources that require special assistance. It is our hope that the UNDP and its capacity 21 funding mechanism will be persuaded to acknowledge our special needs.

Antigua and Barbuda applauds the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for its very compelling promotion of the rights of women. It takes no special effort for my small island developing country to recognize that successful development requires the unhindered contribution of every able-bodied adult, regardless of gender. The elimination of de facto discrimination against women is therefore of paramount importance in my country and my region. UNIFEM, an active partner in the development process, can rely upon Antigua and Barbuda's solid commitment to its universal objective of empowering women in order to strengthen development and to ensure that justice is gender-blind.

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The injustices heaped upon the heads of the world's indigenous peoples must also quickly cease. To that end, the United Nations has declared 1993 the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. In December 1993 progress made will be measured by deeds, not words. National legislation and funded projects which are intended to ensure the continued survival of the indigenous peoples that inhabit remote corners of the Earth must be in place. Having lost the indigenous Arawaks and Caribs of Antigua and Barbuda beginning in 1492, my country is duty-bound to ensure that powerless indigenous people who have inhabited the lands of their ancestors for many millennia are adequately protected by the United Nations.

Each year, Antigua and Barbuda brings to the attention of the Assembly the state of affairs prevailing on Earth's last uninhabited continent - Antarctica. Last year, we applauded when the 26 voting members of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties entered into a binding agreement forbidding mining and oil exploration on Antarctica for 50 years, until the year 2040. Although the agreement successfully curbs this generation's cupidity, we believe that Antarctica must never become the possession of large States only. Transforming Antarctica into a world park or protected area under the umbrella of United Nations control would be a more certain guarantee of its preservation.

During the past year, more human beings died of starvation and violence in Somalia than the entire population of my country. Tens of thousands more will die in the coming months by self-inflicted violence complicated by the ravages of nature. The United Nations, recognizing the desperation of Somalia's 4.5 million people, must further increase its efforts to find a solution to the crisis.

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On the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations has spared no effort to end the crisis. The European Community is apparently determined that some crises require more than a regional response. Those of us from Latin America and the Caribbean, whose regional organization has addressed the intractable question of Haiti with little success, have the benefit of the European experience as a guide.

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My country rejoices with the Central American countries as peace blankets their region. The sound of working hands has replaced the sound of working guns, we are told. If future civil war is to be prevented, however, the economic systems which prevail in Central America must become far more inclusive: the sharing of wealth must result in more than a trickle going to the poor.

The trickling flow of peace in the Middle East is most heart-warming. Antigua and Barbuda applauds the Israelis and the Palestinians for finally sitting down together and negotiating their future. It is our hope that, soon, Israel will be allowed to exist within secure and accepted borders and that the Palestinians will have a sovereign State of their own.

We rejoice at the wave of peace which has engulfed Lebanon. Despite the unresolved problems, which the electoral system has attempted to address, Lebanon is facing the future with a certainty of peace that has eluded it for more than a decade. A land as beautiful, as culturally diverse and as full of so many warm people as is Lebanon must pledge to enter the twenty-first century at peace with itself.

My delegation concludes by recalling that the modern history of our peaceful Caribbean began 500 years ago when another world collided with it. The pursuit of accumulated wealth which propelled one world towards the other remains the motive force of the dominant civilization of today. Yet, complex webs have been weaved into this underlying theme, which even a small country, a small place, like mine can take credit in reshaping.

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For example, on 3 October 1736, exactly 256 years ago this year, an unsuccessful slave revolution took place in Antigua. The leaders of that revolution are the heroes of the freedom-loving people of Antigua and Barbuda. In 1736, our heroes attempted to destroy a wicked system which guaranteed the most certain accumulation of wealth at the expense of human misery. By our own choosing, therefore, Antiguans and Barbudans of today, the descendants of those slaves and those slave-masters, have declared that in our hierarchy of values freedom is superior to all else.

In 1992, the human being, not wealth accumulation, is at the centre of development and civilization. Yet, our countries are now engaged in a great debate about the future, and the United Nations General Assembly is the platform. The importance of keeping the entire United Nations system from becoming homogenized in its thinking is most important at a time when the emerging new world order is being shaped increasingly by a single Power.

Our task is not merely to express a differing point of view, but to demonstrate in a concrete manner that the raison d'être of the civilization of the next 500 years has not yet been decided. In fact, given the threat to the very existence of small islands from rising sea levels, violent hurricanes, hazardous-waste disposal and other looming environmental calamities, the burden of defining the future may very likely fall upon the thinkers and actors from these most vulnerable, small countries.

Indeed, our Prime Minister, the Right Honourable V. C. Bird, has frequently said that small size does not mean small minds or the absence of grand ideas. And so, my countrymen and I, having learned well the lessons of our history, shall continue to do all in our power at this United Nations and elsewhere to influence the future. We shall rely upon our collective wisdom,

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the strength of our institutions, the vitality of our youth, and the will of our leadership to exercise that influence. Our very existence requires success; and so we shall succeed.

Mr. TOURE (Guinea-Bissau) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my country and Government, I should like first of all to convey our congratulations to Mr. Ganev on his election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. His competence and the wealth of experience he has acquired during his career as a diplomat in the service of his country, Bulgaria - which enjoys great prestige on the international scene - constitute, for the members of the Assembly, a sure guarantee for the success of our work.

My delegation particularly welcomes this choice of President because our two countries have good relations, which are marked, among other things, by the massive assistance which his country gave to the heroic liberation struggle of our people and of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) against colonialism. Because of this, I should like here and now to assure him of my delegation's cooperation in carrying out the lofty mission the Assembly has just entrusted to him.

My delegation offers its congratulations and expresses its gratitude to Mr. Samir Shihabi, who, with great talent, wisdom and efficiency, guided the work of the forty-sixth session. We wish him every success in his future endeavours.

Our congratulations and our thanks also go to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his tireless, constant, clear-sighted and successful efforts to safeguard peace and security the world over. We also pay tribute to the Secretary-General's dedication, to his

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visionary ability and his capacity to act, and, particularly, to his concern for preserving the prestige and the effectiveness of the United Nations in all circumstances.

To his predecessor, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who worked relentlessly for the renewal of the United Nations system, the establishment of international peace and security and development, we extend all our congratulations and a ringing tribute for the work he accomplished in the service of the international community. We wish him also every success in his future endeavours.

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The admission of new Members is an important stage in attaining the universality of the Organization, thereby enabling it to undertake greater action and giving it greater dynamism to achieve its objectives. That is why the Republic of Guinea-Bissau welcomes with joy the new Members that have joined our great family since the forty-sixth session. The delegation of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau congratulates all those countries.

The forty-seventh session is being held at a time when international relations have been given a new momentum for progress and dynamism; and this, thanks to far-reaching changes taking place in the world.

The Secretary-General, at the request of the Security Council, has submitted to us a report entitled, "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), in which he refers quite rightly to the concept of preventive diplomacy and the idea of the maintenance, strengthening and consolidation of peace throughout the world. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau supports these initiatives.

This new dynamic which today characterizes international relations, henceforth freed from the cold war, is a source of great hope for stability and opens up prospects for peace, understanding and cooperation which have enabled the United Nations to help in taking concrete initiatives for settling many conflicts.

Yes, the world today has undergone extraordinary change. Everywhere the movement in favour of better democratization and of respect for basic human rights is emerging. We know that such claims will go unheeded if they are not accompanied by the same vital movement for prosperity and well-being. Furthermore, a number of important and dramatic events have afflicted us in

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recent times and have led us to be pessimistic. I am convinced that today, as in the past, the Assembly will be able to find its bearings again.

The situation in southern Africa is hardly improving in spite of the announcement of reforms that will put an end to the system of apartheid. In view of recent developments in that country we are still concerned. However we are following with great interest measures to abolish segregationist laws adopted by the South African Government and we urge it to continue negotiations with the anti-apartheid movements for the final elimination of the apartheid system in that country where the overwhelming majority of the population still does not have the right to vote, to decide its own future and freely choose its leaders.

Inter-ethnic violence caused and maintained by certain backward-looking forces continues to bring the country bloodshed and affliction. My delegation invites the international community to maintain pressure on the South African Government so that the process that has begun may lead to the total elimination of apartheid and to the establishment of a democratic and multiracial society.

The Assembly is certainly aware of the fraternal links of friendship which bind the people of Guinea-Bissau to the brother people of Angola. That is why the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, its people and its Government were overjoyed at the peace process which has begun in that country and which has led to the establishment of a multiparty system and of democratic, free and universal elections.

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For the Angolan people new prospects have opened up enabling it to undertake the reconstruction and development of its sorely-tried homeland. On this occasion of celebrating peace and regained harmony the Government of Guinea-Bissau reiterates its fraternal feelings of solidarity and its wishes for prosperity for Angola.

We earnestly hope that the peace process in Mozambique will have the same outcome and that the international community might soon be able to celebrate the end of the painful fate into which the civil war has plunged that country. We encourage the Mozambican Government to continue along the path of dialogue and we exhort RENAMO to show good will in order to allow for the speedy establishment of peace in that country so sorely tried by so many years of violence.

In Western Sahara we hope that the necessary conditions will quickly be met so that a referendum on self-determination under the aegis of the United Nations might be held as soon as possible in order to establish a lasting climate of peace and security in that region.

In Liberia as well, the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to create an atmosphere that would lead to a normalization of the political situation and to the holding of democratic elections, have, unfortunately, not yet borne fruit. We reiterate our appeal to the warring parties, especially the National Patriotic Forces of Liberia, to comply scrupulously with the Yamoussoukro agreements, especially the agreement reached on 30 October 1991.

The quest for a dynamic solution for a global settlement of the problems of that country are based on essential respect for the rights of all. It does

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not depend only on the willingness of States and people in the region; it must also commit all of us who, for various reasons, have an impact on the behaviour of the various protagonists so that there might be a lasting and just peace.

Somalia has become a field of carnage and of constant concern to the international community. For some time now we have been seeing a fratricidal civil war with disastrous consequences for that country and its defenceless civilian population. The Assembly, a forum for heightening awareness and a court of appeal, will not fail to ask the international community to give more coherent and concrete assistance in the face of this new development in order to bring this bloody and outrageous conflict to an end. We appeal most urgently to the parties involved in the conflict to comply with the agreements signed in Djibouti and to agree to mitigate the sufferings of that brave people. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau, for its part, supports any proposal to find a peaceful solution to this conflict as soon as possible.

In the Horn of Africa there is also Ethiopia, the authorities of which we would like to encourage to continue the dialogue begun for lasting peace and security in that country and in the region.

In the Middle East, we are convinced that peace is possible if the parties to the conflict are imbued with the necessary political will. Guinea-Bissau hopes that a rapid, negotiated solution might be found to the problem of the Middle East so that the peoples of that region might be able to live in peace. The Palestinian people are however entitled to a homeland, to

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a sovereign State, within secure and internationally acknowledged borders. My country therefore supports and encourages all the initiatives undertaken to restore peace between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

We welcome the prospects opened up for the restoration of peace and security in Lebanon. The whole world admires the courage of the Lebanese and I am certain that the whole world will help them to bring about the triumph of their ideas. The Lebanese people will find a source of justified pride in this.

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In Cambodia, new prospects for a lasting peace were opened after the negotiations. One of the most recent prospects is the organization of free elections, being prepared with the welcome assistance of the United Nations, which we should like to commend and encourage. We believe and hope that the organization of these free and democratic elections will put an end to the long years of suffering endured by the heroic people of Cambodia.

As to the question of East Timor, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau is hoping for an acceptable and speedy peaceful conclusion to this serious problem, which is a source of concern to us. The Maubere people must regain its legitimate right to self-determination and independence, if it so wishes. I repeat: if it so wishes. That is why we welcome the high-level meeting of delegations of Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the United Nations with a view to finding the necessary framework for a settlement suitable to all the parties to the conflict. We should like to assure all the parties involved in the process of seeking a favourable and speedy outcome of the conflict of our availability and support.

In spite of their admission to the United Nations, the two Koreas have yet to find common ground for the reunification of the great Korean nation. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau is privileged to have good economic and diplomatic relations with the two Koreas - north and south. That is why we appeal to them to continue negotiations for the speedy reunification of the great Korean homeland.

Similarly, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau urges the Cypriot communities to continue negotiations, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, for a peaceful settlement of the Cypriot conflict.

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The Republic of Guinea-Bissau, again within the context of the quest for peace and harmony among nations, has undertaken diplomatic relations of cooperation and friendship with all countries throughout the world that fervently seek peace and justice.

Guided by this thinking, we also maintain diplomatic relations of cooperation and friendship with the Republic of China (Taiwan). That is why we support and endorse the reference made to that country by the President of Nicaragua from this rostrum.

In this regard, we pay a well-deserved tribute to the valuable assistance given to my country's development efforts by another country from the developing world - the Republic of China - whose economic performance, which now puts it among the major economic Powers of the world, is in many regards exemplary.

In Latin America, we welcome and support the peace process begun under United Nations auspices for the restoration of security and stability in that region.

Since the developments of 30 September in Haiti, President Aristide, the constitutionally elected President, and his Government are still waiting to take up their legitimate places, to which they are entitled. The international community and the Organization of American States should help them in that regard. Guinea-Bissau, which hopes for a peaceful and speedy settlement of that conflict, urges all the parties involved to heed reason and to respect the basic rights of the Haitian people.

The growing tension and conflict in Central and Eastern Europe are jeopardizing international peace and security.

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Guinea-Bissau is anxiously following the evolution of the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Each day we deplore the violence and the hatred in the confrontations that have cost so many human lives. That is why the Republic of Guinea-Bissau commends the initiatives and the efforts of the United Nations, through its Secretary-General, and of the European Economic Community with a view to achieving a peaceful solution to the inter-ethnic conflict.

The successful missions already conducted and the restored confidence in the Organization give solid grounds for satisfaction and, above all, for hope. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau hopes that all those involved in conflict will rediscover the virtues of dialogue and cooperation, which are the only arms that lead to peace.

The Government of General Joao Bernardo Viera, President of the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, has committed all of Guinea-Bissau to a process of pluralist democratization and to the establishment of a State of law, as well as to the improvement and recovery of the economy, with a view to greater social justice.

The process of democratization now under way in Guinea-Bissau is perceived everywhere as the clear sign of fundamental change, whose goal is justice, social stability and greater well-being. So that it can be effective and practical, this process is based on my country's historical social and cultural realities.

In our view, the recent adoption of our Electoral Law narrows the gap between the aspirations of our people and reality, and gives all citizens the means to express themselves freely and indeed to be free. The progressive

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disengagement of the State from the industrial and commercial sector, the encouragement of private initiative, the promotion of private property and the creation of conditions of social stability, unity and national cohesion are at the heart of these transformations now taking place in our country.

However, experience has shown that the attainment of democratic objectives in African countries is necessarily accompanied by some degree of problems and of questioning. The determination to democratize is unfortunately facing difficulties that stem from the implementation of structural adjustment policies, which, it should be stressed, do not have the expected donor support. This situation worsens the state of impoverishment and the feeling of frustration of our peoples. The dependence of Guinea-Bissau, in particular, and of African States, in general, on international agencies and bilateral partners is thereby strengthened.

There can be no doubt that we are at a uniquely decisive and historic stage in which all efforts must converge to strengthen the positive trends that we have observed and to make them irreversible and give a new dimension to the relations between parties and States. This new trend which today characterizes international relations bears the hope of stability and has opened up prospects of peace and understanding.

Guinea-Bissau has, in every instance, endeavoured to work in its foreign relations towards a policy based on confidence, dialogue and harmony.

(Mr. Touré, Guinea-Bissau)

The process of democratic openness begun in Guinea-Bissau and the resulting economic liberalization require the constant support of the international community. This democratic process deserves to be supported, because there can be no real democracy without development. It is therefore clear that a democracy which is not founded on a solid economic base is but an illusion.

It is virtually impossible today to discuss international relations without recalling, with sadness, the seriousness of the economic crisis of the developing countries in general and of the African countries in particular. The decline in export earnings, foreign debt and the inadequacy of resources for development, compounded by natural disasters, have served to further deteriorate socio-economic conditions in many countries.

The United Nations has become aware of this situation and has adopted the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development for our benefit. None the less, the objectives sought have not been attained. The response of the developed countries and of international economic and financial institutions has not been commensurate with their commitments, though most of the African countries have agreed to carry out the reforms imposed upon them.

Africa remains ready, however, to reaffirm its commitment to apply the necessary tranformation policies, as evidenced, inter alia, by the adoption of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, and the proposals made as a result of the final assessment of the Programme. The new framework for cooperation must ensure sufficient resources; debt reduction and cancellation; and the adoption of lasting solutions to commodities problems, in the hope that the agreement thus reached will receive the full support of Africa's partners.

(Mr. Touré, Guinea-Bissau)

In spite of the truly commendable efforts made by the African Governments in the framework of implementing programmes of structural adjustment, our economic situation and living conditions are becoming increasingly difficult.

The Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986 to 1990, which had given rise to such hopes, unfortunately has not responded to the legitimate concerns of the African peoples and leaders for growth and for viable economic and social development.

The approaches taken thus far to finding a solution to the serious problem of debt, while encouraging in certain respects, are far from responding to the real economic concerns of the developing countries. The search for a solution to the foreign-debt problem of the developing countries must not only involve a further strengthening of solidarity in the international community and shared responsibility between creditors and debtors, but must also take into account the growth objective of the developing countries.

As we noted earlier, the world is experiencing extraordinary change. Everywhere, the trend towards greater democratization and towards respect for fundamental human rights is in evidence. But we know that these demands will go unheeded if they are not accompanied by an equally vital drive towards well-being and prosperity.

Furthermore, the international community must give special attention to the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted at the Paris Conference, which remains a charter for us all.

We make a pressing appeal to the international community that urgent and appropriate action be taken with a view to the adoption of a consistent

(Mr. Touré, Guinea-Bissau)

programme of cooperation for the development of the developing countries, and above all, of Africa, an almost forgotten continent.

In this respect, my delegation welcomes the initiative of the Japanese Government to convene once again in 1993 a summit conference on the development of Africa, as well as the French proposal, made by President Francois Mitterrand, to convene a high-level meeting on social development.

The course charted by our countries towards greater freedom and democracy supports the concept expressed in the "Human Development Report" recently published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which recommends "a participative form of development in which the human being is placed at the center of the decision-making process".

In this context, we are gratified by and we unreservedly support the decision to convene a World Conference on Human Rights as planned for 1993 in Vienna.

Along these same lines, women in Guinea-Bissau participated equally with men in the liberation struggle in our country. At the same time, they fought to win their freedom and emancipation.

It is for all these reasons that my Government unreservedly supports the World Conference on Women, to be held in 1995. This long-awaited Conference wil provide an opportunity to review at a very high level the problems of women in the world.

Sustainable and lasting economic and social development can only be achieved in the context of a healthy environment. In our opinion, the Rio Conference was a success, but the implementation of the decisions reached in that important and high-level forum will be even more decisive. After the holding of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, we

(Mr. Touré, Guinea-Bissau)

focus our hopes today on the Commission on Sustainable Development, which is to meet at the ministerial level, and whose task it will be to follow up the implementation of the programmes contained in Agenda 21 and to see to it that they are implemented in an integrated manner.

In that connection, may I, on behalf of my delegation, extend our warmest congratulations and sincerest thanks to Mr. Maurice Strong for the remarkable work that he accomplished at the head of a team whose dynamism, expertise and effectiveness are today recognized by all delegations. Mr. Strong's tireless efforts throughout the preparatory process as well as his personal commitment to the noble task assigned to him by the international community were the best guarantee of the historic success of the Rio de Janeiro Conference. It is our hope and our belief that he is among the best-qualified people, if not the best-qualified person, to guide the initial steps of the secretariat of that Commission. This is certainly vital to ensure the effective implementation and prompt follow-up of the commitments reached in Rio.

In this connection, the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development will necessarily require an identifiable structure. Its staff must be highly qualified and conform to an equitable geographical distribution, and it must base itself on the experience acquired in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development preparatory process.*

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* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Touré, Guinea-Bissau)

The idea of rapidly establishing a structure and staff for the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the Rio Conference prompts us to consider that solutions to environmental problems must necessarily take into account development in all its dimensions, particularly in its regional socio-economic dimensions.

Part of Guinea-Bissau, a member of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), is in a region afflicted by drought. We call urgently for the rapid establishment of an intergovernmental committee that will be entrusted with the development of an international convention to fight drought and desertification. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau reaffirms once again its support of the Bamako Convention, which prohibits the importing of waste to Africa, and the Bamako Commitment of the African countries regarding their priorities in the field of the environment.

The World Summit for Children, held in 1990, broke new ground for the improvement of living conditions of children the world over. We have adhered to and implemented the decisions and recommendations that came out of that Summit. As our immortal leader Amilcar Cabral said, "Children are the flowers of our struggle and the reason for our fight."

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) Conference on the African Child, which will be held next November in Dakar, Senegal, will be an opportunity to show our active solidarity with children, who, unfortunately, suffer from so many problems and also to show that the international community is in solidarity with all African youth.

Now that tensions between East and West have been resolved and ideological antagonism has ended, it remains for us to pay attention to the

(Mr. Touré, Guinea-Bissau)

developmental problems of the poor countries and thus to ensure international peace and security.

In this very Assembly, for years on end, high-ranking personages have from this rostrum drawn our attention to the decisive role of disarmament in the evolution of the developing countries. This is a dimension that we must never forget in our work.

That is why the Government of Guinea-Bissau supports the establishment of a moral and political climate that encourages the total elimination of all arms of destruction, because reductions in military budgets and expenditures will benefit economic and social development in many parts of the world at large and in Africa in particular.

Like the environment, other problems suffered by Africa - AIDS, tuberculosis, yellow fever, drugs and more - could be faced up to with the support and effective assistance provided by the colossal sums of money that would be freed up through complete and total disarmament.

But at this point we should like to commend the United Nations system, the funding bodies and the international organizations - both governmental and non-governmental - such as the World Health Organization (WHO) for their efforts and support thus far in helping us face the scourges that ravage our continent.

In spite of the uncertainties hanging over the global economy and international relations in general and above all the risk of marginalization for the African continent, it is unthinkable that the peoples, countries and Governments affected by crisis might yield to disarray or discouragement.

Mr. GYAW (Myanmar): May I begin by extending to you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, warmest congratulations on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. We are confident that under your leadership our deliberations will be fruitful.

Allow me also to express our admiration for the very able and dynamic manner in which your predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, guided the work of the last session. His stewardship of the Assembly at a most crucial juncture in mankind's history has left an indelible mark on the institution of the presidency.

The delegation of Myanmar notes with appreciation the remarkable achievements of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the brief period since his assumption of his high office. This world Organization is fortunate to have at its helm a statesman of his stature and experience at this moment in history. He heads our Organization at a time when it is not only seized of momentous peace-keeping operations but also challenged by uncertainties in several parts of the world. May I assure him of the full support of the delegation of Myanmar.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the former Secretary-General, for the wise and skilful manner in which he led our Organization through difficult and trying times.

Within a short span of 10 months our Organization has grown rapidly with the addition of 13 new Members. The delegation of Myanmar warmly welcomes them to our midst.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

The admittance of those new Members to the United Nations reflects the significant changes taking place in contemporary international life and has brought the United Nations closer to achieving universality of membership. We feel sure that the new Members will have positive contributions to make to our Organization.

This session of the General Assembly takes place in an international environment that is markedly different from that which existed even a year ago. Although the end of the cold war has effectively ended ideological posturing and has led to renewed confidence in the United Nations, it has, unfortunately, not eliminated all sources of strife and conflict. The recourse to arms in the Balkans, the Horn of Africa and other parts of the world serve to remind us of the fragility of peace in our contemporary world.

Against that backdrop, the delegation of Myanmar is pleased to note that steps have been initiated to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to meet the twin challenges of maintaining international peace and security and of dealing with global problems. The summit meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992 provided an historic opportunity for taking stock of the situation and exploring ways and means of strengthening cooperation, particularly in the field of maintaining international peace and security.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

The fresh look contained in the Secretary-General's report, "An Agenda for Peace", is indeed timely, as the Organization, now more than 45 years old, needs to adapt to the rapidly changing world. In this process, however, care needs to be taken to ensure consistent adherence to the principles articulated in the Charter. Most important, caution must be exercised to guarantee that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States within the established international system are not allowed to be eroded.

To be truly effective the United Nations must by its own actions inspire and command the confidence of all Member countries. Its actions must be governed by a sense of justice and guided by the principles of the Charter. The decisions of the Organization must reflect that collective will and not the narrow interests or predilections of a nation or a group of nations. Any departure from those principles is bound to be divisive and to detract from our efforts to construct a fair and equitable international order. The time is ripe to examine whether the constitutional balance between the principal bodies of the Organization, particularly between the General Assembly and the Security Council, is being consistently maintained as envisaged in the Charter.

If attempts at reform are to succeed, trust must prevail; and trust, as the Secretary-General states in his report, "requires a sense of confidence that the world Organization will react swiftly, surely and impartially and that it will not be debilitated by political opportunism or by administrative or financial inadequacy". (A/47/277, para. 83)

Transformations and uncertainties prevailing in the present international environment underscore the need for countries of the world to work together to remove the root causes of strife and conflict. The Non-Aligned Movement, whose membership encompasses close to 110 developing countries from around the

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globe, stands out as an organization that can not only safeguard the political, economic and social independence of its member States but also play a constructive role in charting a course to a new global order that is just, peaceful and secure. Although the world has witnessed unprecedented changes in recent years, the principles on which the Movement is firmly anchored remain as valid today as they were four decades ago. So long as the world is faced with adverse situations, and the freedom and independence of nations are challenged, and so long as the strong exploit the weak, the Non-Aligned Movement, under whatever name, will continue to be relevant. In the light of the evolving world situation the Movement can and must play an increasingly active role in international affairs to bring about a new world order of justice, peace and security. For this reason, Myanmar resumed participation at the Tenth Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held last month in Jakarta. As a founding member we have always cherished and adhered to the principles of the Movement and are confident that we will be able to contribute positively to the long-term interests of the Movement.

One field of human endeavour which has benefited from the winds of change sweeping our world is disarmament. Within the short span of a few years, there has been a significant number of agreements on disarmament that together have effectively diminished the possibility of a nuclear conflict between nuclear-weapon States. For this positive trend to continue, it is imperative that the momentum generated by the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), and the Strategic Arms Reductions Talks (START) be carried forward. The agreement of 16 June 1992 between Presidents Bush and Yeltsin on further cuts in nuclear-weapon arsenals is

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therefore encouraging. Noteworthy also is the unilateral decision of the United Kingdom, announced on 15 June 1992, to reduce and in some instances even eliminate naval and maritime air tactical nuclear weapons. While the Union of Myanmar is encouraged by these recent measures, we believe that even more significant cuts in nuclear arsenals by all the nuclear-weapon States are called for, so as to remove the sword of Damocles that hangs over our heads.

In the wake of the Gulf war and the ongoing conflicts in parts of Europe which are in the throes of transition, there is a heightened sensitivity to the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. My delegation feels that recent accession by the People's Republic of China and France to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a positive step that will buttress the existing nuclear non-proliferation regime. All five nuclear Powers with permanent seats on the Security Council are now States parties to this important multilateral instrument. This augurs well for the future of NPT, the review conference for which is less than three years away.

Since the twentieth session of the General Assembly, when Myanmar joined other countries in proposing a nuclear non-proliferation treaty, we have sought an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States. It was only because these responsibilities and obligations were unfulfilled that Myanmar did not become a signatory. Now that the principal nuclear-weapon States have initiated measures in the direction of effective nuclear disarmament in keeping with the declaration made in the Treaty and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Myanmar Government has decided to accede to the NPT.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

Arrangements are in hand to deposit the instruments of accession in London, Moscow and Washington.

In the light of the momentous changes in the world, the time has arrived for the nuclear Powers to reassess their need for nuclear testing. We continue to believe that a comprehensive test ban is an indispensable step towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. We are therefore encouraged by the decision of France and Russia to suspend nuclear tests for 1992, and hope that others will follow their good example.

This year is a landmark year for chemical-weapon disarmament. The successful conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons is the culmination of years of hard work. For several years now, there has been complete unanimity in the international community on the urgent need to conclude such a convention. It was only because of the complexity of the issues involved - such as on-site verification activity and national rights to economic and technological developments to be guaranteed as nations implement their obligations under the agreement - that the convention took years in the making. The convention is one of the most important achievements in the history of multilateral disarmament negotiations, and the delegation of Myanmar would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, for his unremitting efforts and to all delegations that have contributed towards the achievement of the consensus text. Myanmar has consistently sought a total ban on chemical weapons - one that is comprehensive, universal and effectively verifiable. As a country that neither possesses nor manufactures those weapons of mass destruction, nor has any intention of acquiring them in the future, we welcome the convention and intend to become an original signatory.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

The peace Agreement signed on 23 October 1991 provided a comprehensive framework for ending 12 years of conflict in Cambodia. Myanmar, as a friend and neighbour, rejoiced at the positive development and looked forward to the early implementation of the Agreement. But today Cambodia is faced with a complex of problems. If these problems are not addressed expeditiously, both the peace and the economic development that all parties concerned are looking for will remain elusive.

The United Nations has embarked on one of the most ambitious missions in its history to restore peace with the establishment of a United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). That organization is doing a commendable job in administering the country in the run-up to the elections. But to succeed it needs the support of the international community as well as the Cambodian parties concerned. We urge all parties to the conflict to cooperate fully with UNTAC in keeping with the letter and spirit of the agreement to ensure a smooth path to the elections.

The Middle East question continues to be of concern to the international community. Notwithstanding the fact that the peace process has been kept alive by the ongoing talks in Washington, the question still remains unresolved. A change of attitude is essential to the resolution of outstanding issues. My delegation is encouraged to discern some flexibility now being displayed by the parties directly concerned. We continue to believe that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region can be achieved only through the faithful application of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) in their entirety.

In South Africa, a democratic reform process initiated last March was hailed as a major step towards the dismantling of apartheid, and the creation of a non-racial society. The world had hoped that the measure would provide

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

a fresh and compelling impetus to the negotiations taking place within the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa launched in December 1991. Unfortunately the political process was interrupted by the violence sparked by the 17 June Boipatong massacre.

We welcome the recent agreement between President De Klerk and Mr. Nelson Mandela to resume the dialogue. It is our hope that common ground can be found to bridge the gap between the principal political players so that the communal violence that has rent the fabric of the South African society can be avoided and the political process resumed to achieve the goal of a peaceful transition to a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa.

The global economy remains sluggish, and the prospects for its recovery are dim, particularly in the immediate future. The uncertain and unfavourable economic environment is having a negative impact on all countries, both developed and developing, but more so on the developing ones. Now is the time for the global community to make an all-out effort for the revitalization of growth. Only a more dynamic world economy can bring about world prosperity and stability.

The developing countries are faced with the very difficult task of cushioning their economies against the world economic slowdown. As commodity-dependent economies, they are adversely affected by falling demand for their exports and declining world commodity prices. Commodity prices are at record low levels and are not expected to recover substantially. These difficulties are compounded by continuing protectionist trends, moves towards unilateralism, and managed trade. That is why Myanmar places great importance on a strong multilateral trading system and special significance on the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, which is expected to usher in a more open international trade regime.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

There were, however, a few encouraging signs in 1991. Net transfer through direct investment showed an upward trend. Also, for the first time since the debt crisis in 1982, there was a positive net transfer of financial resources to capital-importing developing countries. On the other hand, the flow of official development assistance to developing countries stagnated. Interest rates retained their historical highs, and payment for debt service, bilaterally and multilaterally, continued to rise. There was also a further increase in the total external debt of the developing countries. Consequently the external debt problem of the developing countries remains far from being resolved, and an equitable and lasting solution to the debt crisis is urgently required. Moreover, to halt the economic slowdown and bring about renewed impetus to recovery, a determined and concerted effort by the global community, particularly by those developed countries whose policies have a direct bearing on the present state of the world economy, is a prime requisite.

In the emerging new global order, the United Nations will be called upon to play an increasingly active role. The magnitude of the task ahead will require all the energy and attention the world Organization can bring to bear on them. The success of the Organization will depend on the collective will of the membership to work together to achieve the objectives of the Charter. The Union of Myanmar, on its part, will continue, as in the past, to co-operate fully with the Organization.

Myanmar's manifest desire to do so is demonstrated by its actions in such areas of global concern as the environment, narcotic drugs abuse control, and human rights.

Some four months ago nations of the world gathered in Rio for the historic Conference on Environment and Development. It is now for this Assembly to take the necessary follow-up measures to consolidate and build

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

on the achievements attained in Rio. The three documents adopted by the Conference and sent to the Assembly for endorsement provide the broad framework for a new global partnership in our common quest for sustainable development. A firm commitment to provide the developing countries with new, adequate additional financial resources on a predictable basis is of utmost importance if we are implement the proposed plan of action to protect and preserve planet Earth. It is hopes that during the course of the present session of the Assembly concrete steps will be taken to achieve this objective.

Another important task for all of us is to determine the specific procedures and organizational modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development and give shape to it. This being the primary intergovernmental mechanism recommended by the Conference for follow-up and implementation of its decisions, the importance of the commission cannot be overemphasized. In our view the proposed commission will not only prove indispensable to affect the integration of environment and development envisaged in Agenda 21 but will also contribute to enhancing the role of this very Organization.

Much has been achieved at Rio. But much more needs to be done if we are to achieve sustainable development for the common good at the national, regional and international levels. Myanmar is firmly committed to the cause of the environment and sustainable development, and in keeping with the spirit of Rio stands ready to shoulder its responsibilities. Having signed the Biodiversity Convention and the Climate Change Convention, we are now taking the necessary measures in accordance with our domestic procedures to ratify them at an early date. Since Rio we have redoubled our efforts at afforestation. We are also engaging in a nation-wide public awareness

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

campaign stressing the need to preserve and protect the environment. We realize that the road from Rio is even more challenging than the one that led to it. We know that there is no room for complacency.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

Myanmar's commitment to the eradication of narcotic drugs remains steadfast. Significant achievements have been made in suppressing narcotic drugs through the relentless efforts of law enforcement personnel. As in previous years, the destruction of narcotic drug and opium refineries continues. Such an event held in Shan State on 5 June 1992 was witnessed by ambassadors, military attachés and representatives of the United Nations agencies in Myanmar. Activities in the field of medical treatment, rehabilitation and mass media information have been intensified.

The problem of narcotic drugs is multifaceted and requires a comprehensive approach. While Myanmar has taken an integrated approach, utilizing sustantial national resources, it firmly believes that these efforts should be complemented by cooperation at the subregional, regional and global levels. In June of this year, Myanmar took a significant step by signing a subregional cooperative agreement with the People's Republic of China and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP). A similar agreement was also signed with Thailand and the UNIDCP. These agreements are aimed at eliminating opium poppy cultivation and reducing trafficking in narcotic drugs and chemicals used in the refining of heroin in the Myanmar-China and Myanmar-Thai border areas. Talks have also been initiated between Myanmar and Laos on bilateral cooperation in the control of drug abuse. It is also our intention to initiate discussions with our other two neighbours, India and Bangladesh, with a view to setting up similar cooperative arrangements. We are confident that these subregional cooperative arrangements will succeed and promote global cooperation to rid our world of the scourge of narcotic drugs.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

In the realm of human rights, Myanmar has been subjected to undue and unwarranted criticism from some quarters. Critics have unjustifiably portrayed Myanmar as a land where gross violations of human rights have been perpetrated - this, despite the full cooperation we have extended, and are continuing to extend, to the United Nations bodies concerned with the question of human rights, providing clarification or information requested of us. We have also furnished information sought by the Commission on Human Rights and by the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. As a gesture of cooperation we received the two independent experts appointed by the Commission on Human Rights in 1990 and 1991 respectively.

I should like to inform the Assembly that although we dissociated ourselves from the decision taken at the forty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights, we will be receiving the Special Rapporteur appointed by the Commission, in deference to the United Nations and to demonstrate our good will and cooperation. We are confident that his visit will be worthwhile. He will have the opportunity to observe at first hand the true situation obtaining in the country.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that on 24 August 1992 the Union of Myanmar acceded to the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, thus affirming our international commitment to humanitarian principles. The principles enshrined in the Conventions are not new to us. They have been part of the educational and training process of the Myanmar armed forces and of the values cherished by our people.

This year has witnessed many significant developments in our country's march towards a multiparty democratic State. These developments attest to the integrity of the State Law and Order Restoration Council in upholding its

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

assurances to fulfil its declared commitment to meet the aspirations of the people of Myanmar. In accordance with the programme of action spelled out in its Declaration 1/90 of 27 July 1990, the Government issued a follow-up Declaration on 24 April 1992 which maps out the programme to be implemented in a specific time-frame in respect of the national convention that will set out the basic principles for a new constitution. Our past and sometimes bitter experiences have shown that only a firm constitution can guarantee a strong government which will assure the peace, tranquillity and prosperity of the nation.

In accordance with the programme of implementation, a 15-member Steering Committee was established on 28 May 1992. The Steering Committee met with leaders of the elected representatives of political parties and with elected independent representatives in June and July to discuss and cooordinate the category and number of delegates to be invited to the national convention. Following a free and frank exchange of views among the participants, there was general agreement that elected representatives, representatives of the political parties, the national races, peasants, workers, the intelligentsia and technocrats, service personnel and specially invited persons are to be included in the national convention. Terrorist groups which renounce the path of armed struggle and return to the legal fold will also have an opportunity to participate. There is a complete convergence of view to the effect that the constitution to be drafted should uphold and safeguard the three main national causes, namely: non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national solidarity; and perpetuation of national sovereignty.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

With the successful conclusion of the coordination meeting, the country has crossed a threshold, and an important political process has been set in motion. The national convention is expected to be convened at the end of the year or by the beginning of next year at the latest. To this end, a commission has already been constituted and is now actively making the necessary preparations for the holding of the national convention. Delegates representing a broad spectrum of the entire Myanmar population will identify and lay down basic principles for the drafting of a firm and stable constitution. The actual task of drafting the constitution will be entrusted to the elected representatives.

In parallel with the preparations being made for the convening of the national convention, the Government has undertaken various measures designed to create an atmosphere and conditions conducive to the establishment of a democratic system in Myanmar. These include: the suspension of all offensive operations in Kayin State and other parts of the country to consolidate national solidarity and unity; the release from detention of individuals against whom action had been taken under existing laws and who no longer pose a threat to the security of the country and the lifting of restrictions on them; the reopening of universities, colleges and other institutes of higher learning that had been temporarily closed; the rescinding of the curfew order throughout the whole country; the revocation of martial law orders that had been in force since July 1989; the reconstitution of township-level Law and Order Restoration Councils that are responsible for local administration with civilian service personnel in anticipation of the future democratic administrative structure and the creation of a separate Ministry of Development of Border Areas and National Races in order to implement more

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effectively measures for the welfare of the national races living in the remote regions of the country.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar is undertaking these measures with conviction and dedication. It is fully aware of the dangers and pitfalls faced by nations in transition from one political and economic system to another. The Government and the people of Myanmar are determined to carry out their tasks at a sure and steady pace to ensure that the aspirations of the people for a democratic Myanmar are realized.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: Following consultations carried out on my behalf, I have prepared a tentative programme of work and schedule for the General Assembly for the remainder of October.

On Friday, 9 October, in the morning, the Assembly will consider agenda item 10, "Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization", including the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace - preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping". Additional meetings will be scheduled as necessary. I should like to propose that the list of speakers for the debate on this item be closed on Friday, 9 October, at 6 p.m.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate on agenda item 10 to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

On Monday, 12 October, and Tuesday, 13 October, the General Assembly will, under agenda item 93 (a), "Questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family", observe the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons.

On Thursday, 15 October, and Friday, 16 October, the General Assembly will, also under agenda item 93 (a), commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing.

On Friday, 16 October, immediately after the commemoration, the Assembly will take up agenda item 138, "Observer status for the International Organization for Migration in the General Assembly".

On Wednesday, 21 October, in the morning, the Assembly will take up agenda item 7, "Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations"; agenda item 13 "Report of

(The President)

the International Court of Justice"; agenda item 20 "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committtee"; agenda item 16 (a) "Election of twelve members of the World Food Council"; and agenda item 16 (b), "Election of seven members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination".

On Wednesday, 21 October, in the afternoon, the Assembly will begin its consideration of agenda item 14, "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

On Tuesday, 27 October, in the afternoon, the Assembly will take up agenda item 23, "Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte"; and agenda item 15 (a), "Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council".

On Wednesday, 28 October, in the morning, the Assembly will take up agenda item 140, "Coordination of the activities of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe"; and agenda item 15 (b), "Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council".

On Thursday, 29 October, in the morning, the Assembly will take up agenda item 21, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States"; agenda item 24, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System"; agenda item 25, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference"; agenda item 27, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity"; and agenda item 29, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States".

I should like to remind members that, while the Assembly fixed Monday, 20 September 1993, as the date for closure of the forty-seventh session, it also fixed Friday, 18 December 1992, as the date on which the Assembly will recess until next year.

(The President)

I hope to keep as close as possible to this schedule so that the Assembly can discharge its responsibilities in an orderly fashion. I therefore appeal to those representatives submitting draft resolutions to do so sufficiently in advance of the dates fixed for consideration of items in order to give members adequate time to examine them.

I should also like to remind representatives that at its 3rd plenary meeting the General Assembly took note of the fact that, depending on the type and complexity of proposals involving changes in the work programme and additional expenditures, the preparation of a statement of programme-budget implications by the Secretary-General could take a few days and that, in addition, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee would need adequate time to review the programme-budget implications of a draft resolution before the latter could be acted on by the Assembly.

Further, the Assembly took note of the fact that it was therefore desirable that Member States submit proposals involving statements of programme-budget implications in sufficient time to avoid cancellation of meetings and postponement of the consideration of items.

The tentative schedule that I have just announced will appear in the verbatim record of this meeting, as well as in the Journal summary. I shall keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes.

The lists of speakers for all these items are now open.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.